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Human rights questions: human rights situations and reports of special rapporteurs and representatives

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005

Situation of human rights in Myanmar

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.3/58/L.68/Rev.1

Statement submitted by the Secretary-General in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly

A. Requests contained in the draft resolution

1. At it 61st meeting, on 1 December 2003, the Third Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.3/58/L.68/Rev.1 as orally revised. The programme budget implications of the draft resolution were presented to the Committee in document A/C.3/58/L.82 and are reproduced below, reflecting the oral revisions, for the consideration of the Fifth Committee.

2. Under the terms of paragraph 7 of draft resolution A/C.3/58/L.68/Rev.1 as orally revised, the General Assembly would request the Secretary-General:

(a) To continue to provide his good offices and to pursue his discussions on the situation of human rights and the restoration of democracy with the Government and people of Myanmar, including all relevant parties to the national reconciliation process in Myanmar;

(b) To report to the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session and to the Commission on Human Rights at its sixtieth session on the progress made in the implementation of the resolution;

(c) To give all necessary assistance to enable his Special Envoy to implement the resolution and, in the context of the facilitation role, to explore any and all possibilities for discharging fully and effectively his mandate;

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(d) To continue to give all necessary assistance to the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the situation of human rights in Myanmar to enable him to discharge his mandate fully.

B. Relationship of the proposed requests to the medium-term plan for the period 2002-2005

3. The above requests relate to subprogramme 1.1, Prevention, control and resolution of conflicts, of programme 1, Political affairs, and subprogramme 3, Advisory services, technical cooperation, support to human rights fact-finding procedures and field activities, of programme 19, Human rights, of the medium-term plan for the period 2002-2005, as revised.[1]

C. Activities by which the requests would be implemented

4. In his report to the General Assembly, the Secretary-General stated that the United Nations, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the international community at large must join hands in order to facilitate the democratic transition in Myanmar in time for 2006, when the country assumes the ASEAN chairmanship. He also reiterated his determination to do his utmost, together with all interested Member States, to revive/reinvigorate the national reconciliation process.[2]

5. In his subsequent update on the efforts of his good offices, the Secretary-General noted that the Government of Myanmar had announced a new seven-step road map to democracy, but had yet to take into account the views expressed by a large number of parties inside Myanmar by demonstrating concretely that the road map process would be genuinely participatory and transparent and, as a matter of priority, defining the time line for its implementation. He also appealed to the Prime Minister and other Myanmar Government leaders to immediately lift the remaining restrictions imposed on Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, other National League for Democracy (NLD) leaders and those detained in connection with the 30 May 2003 incident, and to allow NLD to reopen its offices across the country. He further appealed to the Government to begin a substantive dialogue with NLD and representatives of all of Myanmar's political parties and ethnic nationalities for implementing the road map in a meaningful way. Furthermore, the Secretary-General underscored his firm belief that those steps were the first requirements for a successful democratic transition, and reiterated the need for his Special Envoy to be allowed to visit Myanmar as soon as possible to facilitate the process of national reconciliation and democratization.[3]

6. Consistent with the requests contained in paragraph 7 of draft resolution A/C.3/58/L.68/Rev.1, the efforts of the good offices of the Secretary-General would be continued in 2004, in pursuit of his discussions on the situation of human rights and the restoration of democracy with the Government and people of Myanmar, as well as all relevant parties to the national reconciliation process. The efforts of his good offices would be carried out through his Special Envoy, and the progress made in the implementation of the present resolution would be reported to the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session and to the Commission on Human Rights at its sixtieth session.

D. Estimated resource requirements

7. The estimated costs of continuing the efforts of the good offices of the Secretary-General to facilitate the process of national reconciliation and democratization through his Special Envoy for Myanmar, as requested in paragraph 7 (a) and (c) of draft resolution A/C.3/58/L.68/Rev.1 for a one-year period, from 1 January to 31 December 2004, amount to $245,900. This amount would cover the salaries for the Special Envoy on a when-actually-employed basis as well as the salaries and common staff costs for one staff, who would provide support to the Special Envoy; the official travel of the Special Envoy to Myanmar, neighbouring countries in the region, Europe and North America, including United Nations Headquarters; and miscellaneous services in support of his mission. Substantive and administrative support to the Special Envoy would be provided by the Department of Political Affairs. (For a cost breakdown of these activities, see the annex to the present statement.)

8. With regard to the request contained in paragraph 7 (d) of the draft resolution, the mandate of the Special Rapporteur falls under the category of activities considered to be of a perennial nature. Provisions for activities of this nature have already been included in the programme budget for the current biennium, as well as in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005, under section 24, Human rights.

E. Action required from the General Assembly

9. Should the General Assembly adopt draft resolution A/C.3/58/L.68/Rev.1 as orally revised, a provision in the amount of $245,900 would be required for the period from 1 January to 31 December 2004 for the continuation of the efforts of the good offices of the Secretary-General relating to the situation in Myanmar.

10. These requirements would be charged against the provision of $163,178,100 proposed for special political missions under section 3, Political affairs, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005.[4]

Notes

[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 6* (A/57/6/Rev.1).

[2] A/58/325, para. 16.

[3] A/58/325/Add.1, paras. 13 and 15.

[4] A/58/6 (Sect. 3).

Annex

Cost breakdown

Personnel costs

1. A provision in the amount of $130,900 is required for the salary of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, at the Under-Secretary-General level, for an estimated period of 210 days in 2004, at the rate applicable to individuals engaged on a when-actually-employed basis, and for the salaries and common staff costs of one local staff, who would provide support to the Special Envoy.

Travel

2. A provision amounting to $109,000 is required for the travel of the Special Envoy to Myanmar and neighbouring countries within the region, Europe and North America. Requirements for travel include airfare, daily subsistence allowance and terminal expenses for an estimated 24 trips during 2004.

Operating costs

3. Requirements for miscellaneous services, including telephone calls, facsimile charges and other miscellaneous services, are estimated at $6,000.